

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4612

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 3750

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY & CALCUTTA FROM
MADRAS MARCH 11, 1976 REPEATED FOR YOU

QUOTE

MADRAS 492

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: TAMIL NADU CHIEF JUSTICE CHARGED WITH ECONOMIC OFFENSES

REF: MADRAS 460

1. WE HAVE RECENTLY LEARNED FROM WHAT WE CONSIDER A RELIABLE
LEGAL SOURCE THAT CRIMINAL CHARGES FOR "ECONOMIC OFFENSES" WERE
FILED AGAINST MADRAS HIGH COURT CHIEF JUSTICE K. VEERASWAMI BY
THE CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION IN THE COURT OF THE CHIEF
METROPOLITAN MAGISTRATE IN MADRAS ON MARCH 10. ACCORDING TO OUR
SOURCE, VEERASWAMI IS CHARGED WITH HAVING CONCEALED INCOME (SAID
TO BE RUPEES 27 LAKHS) WHICH WAS NOT DECLARED IN HIS TAX
RETURNS AND ALSO WITH POSSESSING AN UNDECLARED FOREIGN BANK
ACCOUNT. THE CBI IS RUMORED TO HAVE RAIDED VEERASWAMI'S HOME
AS EARLY AS JANUARY, PRESUMABLY IN BUILDING UP THE CASE WHICH
COULD BE USED AGAINST HIM IN THE FUTURE.

2. THE MORNING PAPERS ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT VEERASWAMI IS
GOING ON LEAVE EFFECTIVE MARCH 11 PREPARATORY TO HIS RETIREMENT
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ON APRIL 8 AND THAT JUDGE R.S. KAILASAM HAS ALREADY BEEN NAMED

TO SUCCEED HIM. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THE CHIEF JUSTICE BECOMES AN ORDINARY CITIZEN ONCE HE GOES ON LEAVE, SO THE GOI WILL BE ABLE TO PROCEED WITH ITS CASE AGAINST HIM. WE HAVE HEARD THAT THE GOI WANTED VEERASWAMI TO RESIGN BUT GAVE HIM THE ALTERNATIVE OF GOING ON LEAVE PRIOR TO HIS RETIREMENT.

3. THE MAGISTRATE IN WHOSE COURT THE CASE AGAINST VEERASWAMI IS BEING FILED, JOHN ARTHUR, WAS TRAINED BY VEERASWAMI AND IS CON-

SIDERED A PROTEGE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE. IT IS BELIEVED HERE THAT ARTHUR WILL BE TRANSFERRED SO THE CASE AGAINST VEERASWAMI CAN BE HEARD BY ANOTHER JUDGE.

4. COMMENT: THE ACTION AGAINST VEERASWAMI APPEARS TO BE PART OF THE CENTER'S CONTINUING ASSAULT ON THE DMK, SINCE VEERASWAMI WAS KNOWN FOR HIS PRO-DMK LEANINGS AND BECAME CHIEF JUSTICE UNDER DMK RULE. THAT THE GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY IS READY TO PROCEED AGAINST HIM SO CLOSE TO HIS RETIREMENT LEADS TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO MAKE AN EXAMPLE OUT OF HIM. THE CASE AGAINST HIM MIGHT BE CONSIDERED TWO-PRONGED, AS FAR AS THE CENTER IS CONCERNED, SINCE IT NOT ONLY WILL FURTHER UNDERMINE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE DMK AND ITS APPOINTEES BUT OF THE JUDICIARY IN GENERAL AS WELL. IN THIS REGARD, WE HEAR FROM THE SAME RELIABLE LEGAL SOURCE THAT TWO OR THREE MORE PRO-DMK JUDGES OF THE MADRAS HIGH COURT MAY BE TRANSFERRED TO HIGH COURTS IN OTHER STATES WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE. SIGNED MCCASKILL
UNQUOTE
SCHNEIDER

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